

State Equity Plan Receives Approval



In July 2014, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) renewed its requirement that each State Educational Agency submit a state plan to provide equitable access to excellent educators that ensures “poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.”

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) submitted its plan to the USDE on June 1, 2015. After review from the USDE, some revisions were requested and a revised plan was submitted again on August 28, 2015.

The NDDPI is pleased to announce that our plan received approval from the USDE on October 22, 2015. You can view the [North Dakota State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators](#) online, as well as the [approval letter from the USDE](#).

The NDDPI has embraced the opportunity to revisit the topic of educator equity. There have been many changes in education since 2006 when states last submitted a state equity plan. In fall 2014, the NDDPI created a committee of distinguished educators to help the state update and submit North Dakota’s state equity plan. The committee was instrumental in providing input representing voices from the field and various educational entities. The NDDPI is currently in implementation mode and is rolling out the numerous strategies within the plan.

One of the most urgent strategies within the plan was to establish a Teacher Shortage Task Force, which Superintendent Baesler acted upon in June 2015. The task force will work on long-term solutions to North Dakota’s teacher shortage. The NDDPI is also working to establish a loan forgiveness website for teachers that will provide information regarding the various loan forgiveness programs available to help teachers with their student loan debt in the hope that this will encourage more college bound students to enter the teaching field. A third strategy outlined in the plan has the NDDPI developing guidance on a Junior Elementary Teaching (JET) program. This program allows high school students with strong grade point averages to go into the elementary school for a portion of their day and be a teacher assistant.

Questions regarding North Dakota’s State Equity Plan can be addressed to Laurie Matzke, Division Manager of Student Support & Innovation, NDDPI, at lmatzke@nd.gov or (701) 328-2284.